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Mr. *Williams's*

ELECTION-SERMON,

MAY 11th, 1769.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE AUDIENCE OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE COLONY OF

CONNECTICUT,

AT *HARTFORD,*

ON THE DAY OF THEIR

ANNIVERSARY ELECTION,

MAY 11th, 1769.

By *Eliphalet Williams*, M. A.
Paſtor of a Church in *HARTFORD.*

HARTFORD:

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At a General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the Colony of Connecticut, *holden at* Hartford, *on the second Thursday of* May, *A.D.* 1769.

ORDERED, That *William Pitkin*, jun. Esq; and Col. *John Pitkin*, return the Thanks of this Assembly to the Rev. ELIPHALET WILLIAMS, for his Sermon, delivered before this Assembly, on the Eleventh Inst. and desire a Copy thereof, that it may be printed.

A true Copy of Record,

Examined,

By *GEORGE WYLLYS*, *Secretary*.

An Election Sermon.

PROVERBS, VIII. 15.

By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.

THIS an high honor which the Almighty ruler beſtows on ſome of the humane race, to call them out to act a part in public and exalted ſtations, for his glory, and the good of their fellow-creatures. And as *where much is given, there much will be required*, ſo it greatly behoves thoſe that are thus elevated and diſtinguiſhed, (inſtead of being ſwelled and puffed up with their grandeur, and ſerving their own private ends) to lay out themſelves in proportionable endeavors, to anſwer the important ends of their betruſtment, while

while with the *four and twenty Elders*, they *throw down their crowns before the throne, and worſhip him that* ſits upon it. For the quickening of whoſe active diligence therein, (as well as the keeping them humble) they are often (among other things) reminded, in the ſacred volume, to whom they are indebted for their power, and to what purpoſe veſted therewith, as well as for their accountableneſs for the exerciſes thereof.------And particularly, in the words now read, is pointed out the great author and fountain of power and rule; and the governors among the nations are let to know, on whom they depend for all their juſt authority, as well as all their righteous laws and adminiſtrations for the common good. *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.*——The ſpeaker here is *wiſdom*; by whom the moſt and beſt expoſitors underſtand *the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, God's eternal ſon; *the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.*---In the beginning of the *chapter* indeed that *wiſdom of God*, ſeems to be ſpoken of, which is manifeſt in divine revelation. But from the 12th *V. wiſdom* appears to be diſcourſed of in the character and perſon of *Chriſt*; the ſecond ſubſiſtence in the Trinity, who is called the *wiſdom of God*, Luk. xi, 49. the eſſential wiſdom of the Deity, *in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge.* That it is an intelligent and divine perſon who ſpeaks, ſeems plain, in that it has perſonal properties and actions aſcribed to it: & this can be no other than the ſon of God himſelf, to whom the principal things here ſpoken of, are attributed in other ſcriptures, it is the ſame who is titled the *Logos* by St. *John*, who gives

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us the beſt expoſition of this *context* in the four firſt verſes of his goſpel.---All divine revelation is the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, which God gave to him, who imparts the mind and will of God to mankind. —He is here repreſented as a great and illuſtrious perſonage, and with tender and powerful perſuaſives, alluring wandering ſinners from the paths of ruin to thoſe of happineſs. And alſo adminiſtring many wiſe and inſtructive reproofs and admonitions to that end.---And as an inducement to all to join themſelves and become voluntarily ſubject to him, the enthroned Jeſus, he ſuggeſts (among others) the conſideration, that all the Potentates of the world are concerned to bow at his footſtool, and pay obeyſence to him, who is exalted over all; and that he preſides above and influences thoſe who ſo bear rule as to be bleſſings to mankind; advancing their good by their juſt decrees and government.---*Kings and Princes*, *Senators* and *Governors*, *Nobles* and *Judges* rule as his *deputies*, and ſhould be careful to rule in all things according to his will: and wherein they do ſo, governing with juſtice and equity; they are eſpecially dependant on him, and owe all the good they do to his conduct.----And now may this ever-bleſſed one, this celeſtial wiſdom, be graciouſly preſent in this aſſembly, upon this ſolemn occaſion, and effectually influence and aſſiſt in the diſcharge of the duty of the ſeaſon! then it will not be the concern of the *Preacher* to gratify curious ears, any more than to deal in fulſome compliment to the principal characters preſent; nor the buſineſs of the hearers to criticiſe upon what is ſpoken. But our joint care will

will be to attend to, and obey the inſtructions and counſels of wiſdom for our good.

FROM the words, (as they have been briefly explained) this obſervation natively reſults. That,

DOCTRINE.

As the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the immediate fountain of the magiſtrate's power and office; ſo it is by, or of him, that they who are inveſted with that office (ſupreme or ſubordinate) do rule their people wiſely, juſtly and happily.—Or, in other words.

The eſtabliſhment and preſervation of civil government among men, in the preſent ſtate, *for the promotion of juſtice and righteouſneſs, and* therein *the public good and welfare; and as it ſerves or conduces thereto, is peculiarly owing to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, God's eſſential, eternal Wiſdom.*

THOUGH the governing power be from God, as the author of nature, yet the bleſſings and beneficial influences of it, are diſpenſed to mankind, in their preſent lapſed condition, (as all other benefits are) through and by Chriſt, the divine Mediator. Government may be ſuppoſed to be founded in the law of nature; the condition of mankind being ſuch as neceſſarily requires, and unavoidably puts upon chuſing and ſetting it up: and the commonneſs of ſuch ſentiments demonſtrates, a common cauſe. But by the grand apoſtacy, all bleſſings are forfeited, and dire uproar and confuſion introduced; all things put out of order, and every kind

kind of evil bro't in; tending to general ruin; to universal deſtruction.—In this ſituation, Chriſt, the ſon of God became a repairer of the breaches of creation; the great reſtorer; by whom all things are recapitulated, or *gathered together to an head in him*; through whom the divine kindneſs flows to men: and in his redemption, all *temporal* mercies as well as *ſpiritual*, have their foundation. And he hath the ſovereignty over the whole creation committed to him; and is made the head of all rule and government; apointed thereto upon his interpoſition after man's fall: and the ordering and management of ſtates and kingdoms, and of all affairs through the world is entruſted to his hand. By *whom*, the *perſonal wiſdom of God*, *Kings reign*, *and Princes decree Juſtice*; though not excluſive of God the father, but with his will and full concurrence, who rules by the ſon, the Mediator.——May all earthly *governors* and *governed* too, wiſely conſider it; and know that he who rules *king* on his throne, and is at the head of all principality and power, will alſo *judge*; and thence be thoroughly excited to ſerve the proper ends of his regal authority! ſuitably to the ſubject, I ſhall in diſcourſing on it, (humbly invoking wiſdom's aid) purſue the following method; viz.

I. Speak ſomething of civil government with it's great end and deſign, and its conducibleneſs *to*, or tendency to *promote* the *public good* by decrees and executions of juſtice.

II. Conſider this (*in the preſent ſtate of the world*) in its peculiar relation to Chriſt; or as owing to him, the ſupreme eternal wiſdom.

I. I ſhall treat a little concerning civil government, and the great end of it with it's ſubſerviency thereto; even the promoting of juſtice and righteouſneſs, and *therein* the public weal and ſecurity.--- I ſhall not ſtand to enquire, whether by the *Kings* and *Princes nobles* and *Judges* of the earth, here mentioned, are denoted different ſorts of rulers and men in authority, or diſtinct kinds of government. The expreſſions hold forth government in general, or rule and authority exerciſed among men. And when this reſembles and is modell'd according to the divine rule and government, it is exceeding happy for a people that are the ſubjects of it, and anſwers the important end propoſed therein.——Whether there would have been ſuch a thing as civil government, or what the occaſion and uſe for it, or of what particular kind, had man continued in his primeval ſtate of innocence and rectitude, I ſhall not diſcuſs. Beſure there would not be *all* the ſame ends and reaſons propoſed for it as now.—But in our lapſed condition, and under the woful corruption that has overſpread human nature, and the univerſal wickedneſs in which the world is involved; it is abſolutely neceſſary for the repreſſing and reſtraining men's unruly luſts and paſſions, preſerving order and decorum, and ſecuring men's lives and properties. And it is a merciful inſtitution and appointment of heaven, for the weal of mankind; not a little of the benignity and favour of the all-ruling Deity, being manifeſted in his ſetting up magiſtrates, as his miniſters, for good to us. Next to the *goſpel of peace* civil

 government

government beſpeaks the *great good-will* of the Moſt high, to the children of men.

INDEED, he that made the world, and poſſeſſes all infinite perfections, is the alone abſolute Lord and Governor; and unlimited power is his ſole and excluſive right; nor are any human edicts to be obſerved, when contradicting the divine ſtatutes.—Yet, in matters conſonant to God's will, all are obliged to ſubmit to the laws made by earthly rulers, for the public advantage. For to be wholly without rule and law, is as abſurd and fooliſh as for a man to expoſe himſelf, and all his effects, to the fury of the mercileſs, unrelenting waves, or commit them to the boiſterous deep, in a crazy bark, without *balaſt* or *rudder*, *canvaſs* or *oar*. Licentiouſneſs of doing what every one pleaſes, however repugnant to reaſon or equity, has been reckon'd by ſome, *liberty*: but what is it a liberty *to?* only to wander in the guilty mazes of folly & phrenzy and precipitate into deſtruction. No *tyranny* can be more miſerable than *anarchy*. God therefore in pity to mankind, inſtituted government, without which, in our depraved ſtate, all things would preſently run into confuſion and ruin: for the diſtant terrors of divine judgment (not being ſenſible) would not alone be a ſufficient barrier upon the luſts of men's hearts; but, (without ſome nearer reſtraints) as in *Hobbs*'s ſtate of war, they would act as the wild beaſts of the deſart; prey upon and deſtroy one another, according as their ſuperior ſtrength or craft enabled them.—For preventing wild havock in this province of his domi-

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nions, and with a view to promote his happineſs, our great and gracious Creator appointed order and government; that the diſſolute and refractory may be kept in awe by the authority of rulers; righteouſneſs maintained, and all the community duly protected and defended. The *apoſtle* in his firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy* 2d chap. give us to underſtand that this is the great deſign of the inſtitution, that *we might lead quiet and peaceable lives in all honeſty and Godlineſs*; that men's juſt rights and properties may be ſecured againſt the depredations and incroachments of ſuch as lie in wait to hurt them; and that there may be peace and ſafety to him that goes out and to him that comes in; and each one enjoy his own without any to make him afraid.—'Tis not ordained for the honour and glory, the aggrandiſement or enriching of rulers themſelves, or for their private emolument and advantage, but for the benefit of the people; it being a maxim in which all have concurred, *Salus populi ſuprema Lex eſt*; *the ſafety of the nation is the fundamental law thereof.*—And as the public magiſtrate is veſted with all his power and authority for this purpoſe, 'tis certainly his duty diligently to improve it therefor. The office is evidently appointed to that end, and God has annexed his injunction that it be ſo apply'd and executed. "They that are poſ-
"ſeſſed of it therefore, muſt be obliged to exert
"that authority which the office conveys, for the
"good of that people over whom they thereby
"have power, yea, and claim an honor from.
"Men fond of ſuch truſts, (as one well ſays) will
"find they were not conferr'd as feathers for their
"caps,

"caps, or gratifications to their luſts. Heaven's "ſtamp was not deſign'd to be ſet on poor clay, "to indulge our pride, covetouſneſs, love of do-"minion, or undue liberty, but for a *common good.*" *Whith* GOOD, the ruler is to purſue, in a way of promoting public virtue, truth and righteouſneſs decreeing and adminiſtring juſtice, and preſerving peace and quiet among his ſubjects. Accordingly, as the book of inſpiration characterizes the perſons ruling by their qualifications, telling us, that *he who ruleth over men, ſhould be juſt, ruling in the fear of the Lord*; and that ſuch perſons muſt be *men fearing God, and hating covetouſneſs*; that they may be neither frighted nor bribed from their duty: ſo it no leſs plainly deſcribes their work, viz. that they ought to be *encouragers of*, and a ſecurity to, good and virtuous men, and *the diſcouragers of wickedneſs*, and *terror of evil doers*, as *being God's miniſters to men, for their good.*—And to this high and important end, will *good magiſtrates* ever uſe their power, for the ſuppreſſion of evil manners, and all ſuch vices as diſturb human ſocieties, and the furtherence of regular living; promoting *union, order, juſtice* and *diligence*, which are the very pillars by which all rightly-conſtituted governments are ſupported, and on which their happineſs and ſecurity lean. And by this ſteady and impartial adminiſtration of juſtice and judgment, is the weal of the community, and its moſt important intereſts beſt ſerved. Things then ordinarily go well: peace and good order obtain, while all abide in their proper ſtations, and frugality, induſtry, and all the ſocial virtues abound. Vice, profaneneſs and

wickedneſs

wickedneſs hide their head; and righteouſneſs, ſobriety, temperance and charity prevail, with whatever maketh a ſtate happy and flouriſhing.—*Contrarywiſe*, when this end is neglected, and the ruler's aim is only to ſerve himſelf, and his own particular advantage, all the intereſts of a people, go to wreck. When right is perverted—juſtice bought and ſold—and bribery, venality and corruption are countenanced or winked at, and wickedneſs permitted to triumph and rage without controul; the ſword lying ſtill, or ruſting in the ſcabbard; the public ſafety and happineſs is not only hazarded, but clear gone; and nothing but horror and miſery preſent to view. The channels of juſtice being ſtopped, every thing is out of courſe; the vileſt men fare the beſt, while men of conſcience and integrity are expoſed to the greateſt hardſhips and wrongs, without redreſs, by a ſad inverſion of the order God and nature have ſet. *If the foundations be deſtroyed, what can the righteous do?* And the proſperity of ſuch a people (from the nature of things, and the order of God) muſt needs give way to the abjecteſt wretchedneſs. This is the effect and conſequence of wicked ruler's ill government; who make their people miſerable by their rapines, oppreſſions and injuſtice: who are therefore, by the wiſe *Solomon*, compared to a *roaring lyon and a ranging bear*. Prov. xxviii. 15.—So that *when the wicked bear rule*, the people may well *mourn*, for the miſchiefs they thence feel, as well as for the awful judgments of God which they juſtly fear: and (on the other hand) *rejoice*, *when the righteous are in authority*, for the bleſſed effects

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of their good government; while they employ their authority to encourage and advance righteouſneſs, and to puniſh unrighteouſneſs, and drive far away whatever tends to the prejudice of ſociety. And thus while *juſtice and judgment run down their ſtreets as a ſtream*, joy ſmiles all around, happineſs attends and crowns them; and *God, their own God will bleſs them*; making their *peace as a river*, *when their righteouſneſs is as the waves of the ſea*. This is the End of civil government, and this it's tendency, when rightly ordered and managed, even the procuring and eſtabliſhment of the public ſafety and welfare by the faithful decreeing and indeclinable execution of juſtice, and promoting righteouſneſs among mankind. And as deſigned and conducing thereto, magiſtracy is in a ſpecial manner owing to Chriſt, the Great Head of Rule—which was in the next place propounded to be conſidered, viz.

II. To ſhew what hand or concern Chriſt, the *Divine Wiſdom*, has in civil government, and the righteous and happy adminiſtration of it, in *this revolted world*; or what relation ſuch government has to him. And, in general,

It has a relation of *dependance* and *ſubjection*. It is owing to him (who *hath the key of the houſe of David*) and under his influence and controul. 'Tis *by* and *through* him, that *princes rule juſtly*, and for the public good. Our Lord hath indeed acquainted us, that *his kingdom is not of this world*, but *ſpiritual*, over the hearts and minds of men. It is not *earthly* and *worldly*, according to the chief and primary

primary notion of it; nor is it maintained and upheld by external weapons and arms, or ſecular power; being principally an inward thing in the ſoul. And accordingly, the Prince of Peace, when tabernacling below, made no noiſe; levied no armies; took no ſtate and grandeur, or outward royalty and majeſty on him; nor uſed thoſe methods, which the princes of this world ordinarily do, for the extending and eſtabliſhing of their empires.—YET his kingdom is IN the world; and they who are gathered to his ſtandard, or brought into his kingdom of grace, are for a ſeaſon, inhabitants OF the world. It is therefore ſubjected to his government and ordering, as Mediator: And he is conſtituted *Lord of all*, and all *political things*, "The governments of the world, that "are erected and exerciſed for the good of "mankind, and the preſervation of ſociety, ac- "cording to rules of equity and righteouſneſs, "are under his controul and ſway: and they who "bear rule and authority among men, are in a "ſubordination to him who is the *abſolute Poten-* "*tate*, and are provided by him for the good and "welfare of his people;" who have their *outward* and *corporal*, as well as *ſpiritual* intereſts to be cared for, and with reference whereto, are righteous laws and good rulers ordained by him. "And "what (ſays one *) doth *the miniſter of God for* "*good*, ſound leſs to chriſtian ears than that the "magiſtrate is indeed *the civil miniſter of Chriſt*, "through

* Mr. *Oldfield*, in his diſcourſe for the reformation of manners, where many following ſentiments, as to the ſubſtance of them, are exhibited.

" through whom it is that God *doth good to men.*" The kingdom is the Lord's, to whom belongs ſovereign and univerſal empire, as God; but he rules by the Mediator, and has *delivered all things into his hands*; committing all power and dominion to him, who redeemed us by his blood. And tho' when in his low and humbled ſtate (being engaged in the arduous enterprize of ranſoming us by the ſacrifice of himſelf) he thought not proper to exerciſe this regal authority, as to outward affairs; yet he gave ſeveral ſpecimens of it then: and his right and claim to this honour and power, is now fully aſſerted by God, and abundantly declared in the inſpired oracles: and the higheſt powers on earth, hold of him who is *Lord paramount* over all. *Not* that they are *immediately* commiſſioned from him, but *through* the people; for tho' civil government be a divine inſtitution, yet 'tis alſo a human ordinance, or *the ordinance of men*, as it is called, 1 Pet. ii, 13. magiſtracy is *of God primarily* and *originally*, yet it is *of man ſecondarily* and *inſtrumentally*; God or *Chriſt* making uſe of the miniſtry of men in bringing perſons into the magiſtracy.—" The *ge-*
" *neral inſtitution* of it is of *him*, but the *particular*
" *conſtitution* of it *of man*; the ſpecial mode or form
" of *governing*, not being determined from a-
" bove."—There are divers kinds of government that have obtained in different parts of the world, *monarchy*, *ariſtocracy*, *democracy* or *mixt governments*. It is with men to ſet up which they beſt approve; as alſo to appoint the particular perſons to bear rule, and the methods of adminiſtration: and it is by the conſent of the people that they are entruſted

with the powers of government, ſo that rulers are not raiſed to their poſts without their people; but through the Lord's inclining and uſing them to elect 'em.—Government is divinely authorized, and it is the will of heaven that it ſhould be: but every people (acting freely) have a right to enjoy their own government, and to employ ſuch officers as they judge proper: "all magiſtratical power "being the *ordinance of man*, in purſuance of the "*ordinance of God.* And while they who are intruſt-"ed with it, do the work of God for our good, "they are intitled to a chearful obedience.—" St. *Paul* tells us *there is no power but of God*; meaning *lawful and juſt power*; and yet it is of *man too*, as St. *Peter* aſſerts in a conſiſtency with the former.—The Moſt High diſpoſed the minds of men to come into it, for the common advantage, and approves the exerciſe of it.——"the power is "fundamentally in the people, and by them "lodged in the hands of magiſtrates for the "benefit of all.———" Chriſt don't approve the abuſe or tyrannical exerciſe of power: the miſgovernment, or ill management of rulers is not by his ordering; yet all regular power and true authority is from him, and is to be accordingly ſubmitted to, while they in whoſe hand it is placed do *in the main*, proſecute the great ends of their appointment; govern in a legal way, and ſeek the good, and not the detriment of the governed.—But if any play the *tyrant*, and (regarding neither law nor the common good) act only for *themſelves* and their *faction*, and bring miſchief upon their country; enacting laws, that are rather *decrees of injuſtice*, than the *reverſe*, and oppreſſive and injuri-

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ous to the people; theſe are only permitted by the Lord Chriſt, as a correction or puniſhment to men for their iniquities. They are not properly commiſſionated *by*, nor owned of him in the exerciſes of their authority.—But it is quite another ſort of government and adminiſtration that is the ſubject of our diſcourſe; even the exerciſe and employment of civil rule, to *do juſtice and judgment*, and promote righteouſneſs or univerſal virtue, which [thanks to our bleſſed Redeemer] we have been ſingularly favored with.—And this ſort of government, wherein men conduct in righteouſneſs and rule in judgment, is peculiarly owing to Chriſt the ſupreme ruler, (in concurrence with the Father) both as it's *great author* and *upholder*.

1. He has a concern in it, or it relates to him as it's great author, & the author of it he is, in reſpect of his procurement and his ordination.—Civil government (as well as a goſpel miniſtry) is a bleſſing obtained for mankind, in their preſent ſtate, by the Redeemer of the world; or is owing to the merit of his ineſtimable death.—As ſin kindled a fearful war with *heaven*, ſo 'tis the ſource of war and hoſtility on earth; diſturbing and breaking the peace and harmony that at firſt ſubſiſted and has filled human breaſts with rancour and hate, envy and malice, and all the odious paſſions. And in this degenerate ſtate, the luſts of the heart hurry men on, to fierce conteſts, wars and violence. And in conſequence of our revolt from God, and rejection of his government, and being righteouſly left of him therefor; we could look for nothing in this apoſtate, accurſed world, but perpetual tumults and inſurrections, rapines and quarrels, blood and ſlaugh-

ter, and whatever the furious and headſtrong corruptions of men incite them to; and that the earth (while its inhabitants banded *under* and led on *by apollyon*, the great deſtroyer) ſhould become one vaſt ſtage of wo and horror, the picture of hell. I ſay this were to be expected *but* for the interpoſition of Chriſt, and thoſe means of reſtraint obtained by him: and particularly, the bleſſing of *civil government*, to do juſtice and equity; to *puniſh evil doers*, and *protect and encourage them that do well.*—Men left wholly to themſelves, under the conduct of their depraved inclinations and ſtormy bluſtering paſſions, would render one another as wretched as could be; and every one be *homo homini Lupus*; *biting and devouring one another.*——But the Lord Chriſt interpoſing as an umpire and Mediator, to compound and ſettle the difference between God and man, and effecting *peace by the blood of his croſs*, hath alſo procured amity and peace on earth in a good degree: the divine ſpirit and grace which renews and ſanctifies the ſouls of *ſome*, and implants righteous and peaceable tempers and diſpoſitions in their boſoms; and the providential reſtraints that are on *others*, being the fruits of his purchaſe.----- And particularly, a good government to do juſtice and judgment, to preſerve the world from the extream confuſion and miſery it would be otherwiſe plunged into, far beyond what it now is, is to be eſteemed the iſſue of his undertaking: as indeed all the good a ſinful world enjoys is in conſequence thereof: without which human ſociety would be overflowed with a ſweeping deluge of wickedneſs, and ruin be brought upon all communities.—He is

likewiſe

likewiſe the *author* of it in reſpect of his deſignation and *conſtitution*. It is his mind as well as the Father's that it ſhould be.—*By me* authorizing them, *Kings reign, &c. all judgment is committed to Chriſt the Son*; and by his authority the governors over men *act*; whoſe homage and allegiance is accordingly demanded to *him*, as their ſovereign Lord, in Pſal. ii, 10, 12. Upon his accompliſhing the glorious work he had engaged in, to the acceptance of God the Father, the ſceptre of rule was put into his hand, and a univerſal dominion aſſigned him, to be exerciſed by him, "and hence he had undoubted "right to ſend his goſpel into all nations of the "world, and to ſet up his worſhip among them; "which none of the governors or princes of the "world have right to oppoſe; nor can do ſo but "at their peril." And it is with him, who is *prince of the kings of the earth*, to diſpoſe of all earthly rule to anſwer his own wiſe, holy and gracious purpoſes; to ſerve which deſigns among the ſons of men, are worldly powers delegated by him; and to him muſt they render an account of the diſcharge of their office.—And while they duly attend to their commiſſion and the end of their appointment (which is the common good of the ſocieties that they rule) ſubjection belongs to them *for the Lord's ſake*; the *Lord Chriſt's ſake*; who commands this obedience and gave them their authority, and is repreſented by them, and is honoured by that obedience yielded to them in all things agreeable to his will; by whoſe appointment they govern righteouſly.—And this is alſo owing to the divine Redeemer,

2. As the grand upholder and ſupporter of it—thus

thus he is by inclining and diſpoſing men (in a view of the benefit and utility of it) to continue government, and chuſe perſons to the office; and by raiſing up, ſpiriting and qualifying them for and directing and aſſiſting in it from time to time. The exalted Mediator reigns in the kingdom of providence, and orders and regulates all events, through the wide univerſe; turning the mighty wheels of providence through every age; executing the counſels of his will. And as he *ſets the ſolitary in families*, and forms men into public ſocieties and communities; ſo he gives and preſerves to them their rights and liberties; impreſſes them with an abiding ſenſe of the needfulneſs and advantage of government; and raiſes up fit perſons to rule them under him; exalting one and depoſing another: for by him, *God rules over all the kingdoms of the world, and in his hand there is might and power, ſo that none is able to withſtand him; and he diſpoſeth of all nations as he ſees good.* And in the adminiſtration of this his providential kingdom he maintains government in human ſociety. And eſpecially when rulers are ſet over a people who like *David, lead them by the ſkilfulneſs of their hands, and guide them according to the integrity of their hearts*; and there are *decrees of juſtice*, good and righteous laws, and a faithful execution thereof, rendering the community ſafe and happy; it muſt needs be attributed to the overruling hand; the ſpecial interpoſal and kind ordering of our moſt wiſe and gracious Redeemer.—Nor is it to be queſtioned but this is alſo owing to his *aſſiſtance*, who enables to rule in *righteouſneſs. By me*, by my *counſel*

and

and help, princes govern with wiſdom and equity. In *Chriſt are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*, and as he imparts and communicates all ſpiritual and religious wiſdom, whereby men are made *wiſe to ſalvation*; ſo he is the fountain of all natural and human wiſdom. And in particular, he forms and fits men for government, gives the ſpirit of government; inlays the principles of juſtice, endues them with all their capacities and furniture for ruling, (however ordinarily attained in a way of ſtudy and pains-taking) and beſtows on them both underſtanding and integrity; and thereby lays a foundation, and makes way for their prudent and juſt adminiſtrations, and whatever they be to their ſubjects, he makes them.—This great *luminary* of the world is the ſource of all the light that men have; the light of reaſon and knowledge and of all the diſcretion and ſkill for managing the various affairs of life, as Iſai. xxiii, 26, &c.———And eſpecially is he aiding and aſſiſting to thoſe whom he calls to preſide over and lead others; and that in a peculiar manner, when knowing their dependence, they have their conſtant recourſe to him for an *underſtanding heart*, and that he would be to them *for a ſpirit of wiſdom and judgment, of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.* And even others of a different character, he often ſways and influences to ſerve his deſigns, and the intereſts of his people, *without*, or *contrary* to their intention. In a word, all wiſdom and prudence, conduct and carriage, ſkill and ability, integrity of heart, and firm reſolution to conquer difficulties, and decree and execute juſtice; proceed from him who is

wonderful

wonderful in council and excellent in working.—Thus civil government, particularly as viewed in it's nature and tendency, with its benign aſpect and influence upon the good of ſociety, thro' the exerciſe of *juſtice* and *righteouſneſs*, in the *preſent ſtate*, is, in the hand of Chriſt, the eſſential, eternal *Wiſdom* of God; and from him the anointed Head of all power and authority.

THE APPLICATION now remains.

AND here I ſhall only mention one or two of the many profitable inſtructions or inferences the ſubject would afford; and then conclude with ſome addreſſes ſuitable to the occaſion. And,

1. WE hence gather (which is very obvious to note) that earthly rulers, however great and high, owe entire, ready and unreſerved ſubjection to the Lord Chriſt. They are bound to acknowledge him their Lord, and to worſhip at his footſtool. *This* it is the duty and concern, as well as intereſt, of all people and inhabitants of the world to do. 'Tis the will of God that they ſhould do homage to his Son: the denial whereof induces a crimſon guilt, and expoſes to an awful vengeance. But particularly is this incumbent on ſuch as Chriſt hath commiſſioned and cloathed with power to decree or execute *juſtice*, and accordingly *kings and judges of the earth* are admoniſhed and enjoined *to kiſs the Son*: adore him, and ſubmit to his perſon and government, to him *every knee muſt bow*; nor are the potentates of the earth (however big they may feel, with their titles, ſceptres and diadems, wealth and proweſs, number of their ſubjects, or habiliments

ments of ſtate) exempt herefrom. But as they hold their dominion of Chriſt, who is regent of the univerſe; ſo they are eſpecially obliged to yield all loyalty and allegiance to him, their maſter in heaven: and before whom they muſt one day ſtand, ſtripped of their ſplendid robes and bright attire, on a level with their meaneſt ſubjects—Nor is it a *leſſening* or diminution of their honour, but an heightening of it to own themſelves his ſervants and ſwear fealty to him.—Before him, thrones and dominions, Seraphs and Cherubs, proſtrate fall. The dignified ſpirits of heaven, thoſe favorites of the Celeſtial court; even all the angels of God, having received a charge and command, *to worſhip him*, the Mediator. For a ſcornful and contemptuous diſobedience to which ſupream mandate, (probably) *Lucifer*, that once orient ſon of the morning, with his rebel band, his proud and curs'd accomplices, was hurled by divine thunder from the lofty battlements of the ſkies, to the low dens of perdition.—And can any other rebels to his crown and dignity eſcape better? He poſſeſſes all the unrivalled glories of divinity, and hath this *name written on his veſture and on his thigh, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* And *for him* it is to give laws to the rulers of the world; and *for them* carefully and accurately to obſerve them.—And Oh! with what unſpeakable horror and amazement, what tremblig and paleneſs, muſt they appear at his bar, when he convents them there, as their almighty Judge; if they have ſlighted his edicts, and practically diſowned his authority, and proſtituted the power he gave them

to his diſhonor and the public detriment? Ah! how can they ſtand before him, who is *higher than the higheſt*, and is *terrible to the Kings of the earth?* May the rulers over men, be wiſe to ſubmit to Chriſt's inſtructions; make his glory their aim, and rule for his honor, and receive his tranſporting Euge at laſt!

2. It is alſo natural to infer the obligations that are upon people, eſpecially chriſtian people, highly to prize and eſtimate, and readily ſubmit themſelves *to* their juſt rulers, and their righteous adminiſtrations.——Conſider them as related to Chriſt, our all-merciful Saviour, and his donation, with a view to our ſafety and happineſs; and it can't ſeem a ſmall thing in our eyes, nor fail (one would think) to impreſs our hearts with warm and grateful reſentments of the benignity of our bleſſed Lord.—Our rulers (decreeing and adminiſtring juſtice and judgment) ſhould be greatly reſpected and honored by us; and the kindneſs of him who raiſed them up, furniſhes them for, and gives the ſpirit of their ſtations, preſerves them therein, and enables them to rule for the public good, ought to be moſt thankfully acknowledged and adored; and the overlooking of it muſt be inexcuſable in *us*, who have for ſo long a time, been bleſſed with this ſignal enjoyment, in a manner far beyond moſt people and nations of the world.—And ſuch a government (might it pleaſe heaven to continue it) wherein we ſo clearly read the *heart* and *good-will* of the dear Emanuel, who would be uneaſy under, and for throwing off, or for exchanging for a different one? Shall *Proteſtants*

teſtants and *Engliſhmen*, be regardleſs of the hand which favoured us with ſuch an happy and excellent conſtitution, and delivered us from *Popiſh tyranny* and *vaſſalage?* the *hand* that raiſed to the *Britiſh throne* the preſent auguſt, reigning family of *Brunſwick*; a family encircled with beams of glory? exalted for the nobleſt purpoſes, to bleſs and happify ſo large a people, to be the check and ſcourge of tyrants, to defend the *proteſtant* religion, and public liberties, & free from the curſe of arbitrary power and ſervitude—the hand which guards our ſafety, and has repeatedly blaſted the black deſigns of thoſe that ſought our down-fall and ruin; and by a train of miracles, preſerved our privileges, with the good government ſet over us: a government that has the ſame foundation with our liberty; the joint ſecurity of both which, is inſeparable—a government ſo different from that from which our fathers fled, ſeeking an *aſylum* in inhoſpitable climes, among ſavages, in the wilds of *America*; under which we have (in the main) enjoyed (and hoped ever to do ſo) "as large a portion of civil liberty "as a rational man could wiſh; whereas moſt "kingdoms dare ſcarce reſent their ſlavery, and "others glory in the meer ſhadow of freedom."—How many are groaning under galling chains, and inſupportable bondage? ſunk to the loweſt degree of infamy and wretchedneſs; both bodies and minds enthralled, enſlaved; feeling the dire effects of uncontroul'd power, and ſubjected to the utmoſt diſtreſs and miſery; in countries where popery and tyranny are triumphant; where the *boundleſs* prerogative of the crown is aſſerted, with the

ſervile obedience of the ſubject, and the bleſſing of abject vaſſalage; where people are expoſed to all the oppreſſions, violence, cruelty and madneſs of their abſolute lords; enduring the ſhocking evils of *ſlavery* and *bondage*, which have been denounced by God, againſt wicked and perverſe nations, as miſchiefs comprehending all that is moſt to be abhorred and dreaded in the world.—Such is the doleful ſituation thro' the wide *Turkiſh empire*, as well as the places which own the authority of the *Pope* of *Rome*; yea, and wherever unreſtrained monarchy, and deſpotic power obtain. So 'tis in *Tuſcany*, and the provinces ſubject to the houſe of *Auſtria*, and even in *Spain*, and in *France* too, notwithſtanding the outward appearance of happineſs it makes. "For (as a great man, and an excellent writer * has juſtly obſerved) nothing in this world is more miſerable than that people, under the tyranny of their *ſovereign*; the beſt of their condition being like *aſſes* and *maſtif dogs*, to work and fight, to be oppreſſed and killed for him; and thoſe among them who have any underſtanding, well know that their courage and good ſucceſs, is not only unprofitable, but deſtructive to them; and that by increaſing the power of their *Maſter*, they add weight to their own chains."—He adds, "The ſordid and abject condition of the people of that great kingdom, is manifeſt from the naked backs, and empty bellies of their miſerable ſubjects. Thoſe large nations waſte and languiſh; nothing being ſo common in the beſt provinces belonging

"to

* SIDNEY.

" to them, as miſery, famine, and all the effects of " the moſt outrageous oppreſſion; while their " *princes* and their *favourites* poſſeſs ſuch trea- " ſures, as the moſt wanton prodigality, cannot " exhauſt. That which is gained by the ſweat of " ſo many millions of men, is torn from the mouths " of their ſtarving wives and children, to foment " the vices of thoſe luxurious courts."—Behold! ſuch are the fruits of unbridled rule, in *other countries!* while *we* have *hitherto* breathed the alichering air of *liberty*, the moſt valuable and glorious priviledge of mankind; been ſecure of *property*, which is inſeparable from *liberty*; and had no goverment but what ourſelves approved, and our Redeemer authorized, to *decree* and do *juſtice*, the ſalutary effects of which we have experienced to our joy.—Let *Zion's King* be eyed and acknowledged herein. And while we prize, rejoice under, are thankful for, and ardently ſupplicate the continuance of, a government thus founded and eſtabliſhed; let us learn to yield due ſubmiſſion and obedience to it.—A government ſo equitable, and with all, benign and gentle; and which we have reaſon to think, approbated by our heavenly Lord, as ſubſervient to the purpoſes of his honor, and the common benefit and advantage of the people. *Such*, for the *moſt part*, has the *Britiſh government* been, ever ſince the *revolution* at leaſt, till ſome extraordinary ſtretches of *miniſterial* power of late, which have alarmed and ſpread terror over *America*. And under rulers in general, ſo truly *chriſtian*, and an adminiſtration ſo juſt, prudent and mild, we in this *colony* particularly, have the great happineſs

pineſs to live. And ſhall any *murmur* and *complain*, be *factious* and *contentious*, *diſobedient* and *rebellious*? or not rather all ſtudy to be thankful and quiet, *mind our own buſineſs*, and *follow the things that make for peace*; *rendering honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due.*

I SHALL now ſhut up this diſcourſe, with a particular addreſs to the various orders of men preſent this day. And,

1. WITH all proper deference, I turn myſelf to their *Honors* the *Governor*, *Deputy-Governor*, the *Council* and *Repreſentatives*, in General Court aſſembled.

AND as it is in conſequence of his *Honor*'s command, that I ſtand in this ſacred deſk to day; ye will (greatly reſpected and much revered gentlemen) excuſe the freedom I aſſume to ſtir up your minds by way of remembrance; and exhort to a practical acknowledgement of your dependance (as civil rulers) on Jeſus Chriſt, the king of all worlds; under whom "all earthly powers are but his *vice-*
"*roys* and *officers*; acting by his commiſſion, and
"accountable to him for their management. Ye
"will ſurely accept it as a character of higheſt ho-
"nor and authority, that ye are the civil miniſters
"of our Saviour's moſt *gentle*, yet not leſs *awful*
"government." And at the ſame time, bear in mind your obligations to rule *for*, as ye rule *under* the Redeemer of the world: ſetting yourſelves to promote the common good, in the hand of our common

common Lord; *by whom Kings reign and Princes decree Juſtice.* By which decrees and adminiſtrations of Juſtice, they beſt conſult and ſerve the common weal.----It is an excellent character of *Mordecai* (advanced to high power in the court of the *king of Perſia*) that *he ſought the wealth of his people, and ſpake peace to all his ſeed*; or applied himſelf to further their trueſt intereſts. A firm and ſteady attention to the public good, and faithful proſecution of it, in a way of decreeing and executing righteouſneſs, is a ſhining ornament, a crown of glory and diadem of beauty to civil rulers, far more honourable than the engraving of their names in *braſs* or *marble*, or erecting *columns* and *ſtatues*, *obeliſks* or *triumphal arches* to their memory. This renders like to (being an imitation of) the Lord Chriſt, in his adminiſtrations: makes them important bleſſings to communities; and is acceptable to the Moſt High God, and rewardable of his grace forever.---*Such*, it is to be hoped, ye will endeavour to approve yourſelves; as it is of great concern that ye do ſo. Holding your commiſſion from *Chriſt*, it imports you to act for him; making his glory the matter of your deſigns, and the end of your government; irreſiſtably to plead his cauſe, and aſſert his honor; to cruſh and ſuppreſs vice and wickedneſs, which is diametrically oppoſite to his intereſt; and encourage the practiſe of righteouſneſs and univerſal virtue, which he is engaged to eſtabliſh.

Sirs, ye are entruſted with the *decrees of juſtice*, and fidelity to God and men, require *you* to ſtand up againſt *evil-doers*, *and workers of iniquity*; as far

as

as may be, to diſcountenance and bear down the monſter *ſin*, which *is a reproach to any people*; and promote that *righteouſneſs* which *exalteth a nation*, whereby, as ye will beſt anſwer the deſigns of your office, ſo ye will ſecure to yourſelves (through the riches of grace in Chriſt) the acceptance of your dread Lord, and final Judge, and the reward of *good and faithful ſervants*. But if any are careleſs in that way, of attempting to render their people ſafe and happy; while ſordid ſelf-love ſways, and private intereſt alone engroſſes their attention and regards; as they are perfidious and faithleſs to the Almighty Governor, the King of heaven, and a kind of traytors to their country; ſo they expoſe themſelves to the execration of men; and (which is inconceivably more terrible) the glowing wrath & indignation of the ſupream and infinite Ruler; who will reckon with thoſe his *ſubſtitutes*, and *under-officers*, when he comes at length, arrayed in all his royalty, and with the ſplendor of his avenging perfections. And while he awards *the faithful* to *thrones*, not of *burniſhed braſs* or *ivory*, but of *glory* in the empyrean heavens; will doom others to the abounding horrors of darkneſs; *breaking them with a rod of iron, and daſhing them in pieces as a Potters veſſel*. But we hope better things of you; as we have good ground to do, from your well known and eſtabliſhed characters for juſtice and piety.---And we rejoice in the indulgence of our gracious Lord, in favouring us with rulers of this ſtamp; from whoſe adminiſtration, and under whoſe auſpicious influence, we reap ſuch ſignal *benefits*; *benefits* of a very high account and value;

in

in this channel, derived to us from our exalted Saviour. We bow the knee, in adoring gratitude to him *that ſits in the heavens*, and pay our thankful acknowledgments to your *Honors*, for all thoſe benign and pleaſant effects we partake, from your paternal government, and beſeech you to perſiſt; ſtill leading in the paths of righteouſneſs, and be of good courage; by nothing diverted from the duties of your ſtation, however arduous and difficult; as knowing that HE, *for* and *by* whom ye rule, will be with and bear you out: and HE whom ye ſerve, will cloath you with moſt ſolid, ſhining and durable honors in the end. And tho' ye may meet with the reproaches of wicked men, *ſons of Belial*; the *plaudit* of your Lord, and approbation of your own minds, will infinitely more than counterballance all. *Be ye therefore ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; doing juſtice and judgment, and aſſiduouſly ſeeking the weal of your whole people. And while manifeſting a proper regard thereto, and to the intereſt of virtue and religion in general, without which no people can flouriſh or be happy; ye will be pleaſed in particular, yet to extend your favour and ſmiles to the *College*, and cheriſh that *ſeminary of learning*, which is of ſo great importance to the *public*, and on the proſperity whereof, theſe churches (under Chriſt) ſo much depend; the great advantages whereof, in training up many for eminent uſefulneſs in *church* and *ſtate*, has been abundantly experienced, richly recompencing all the coſt and charge ye have been at for it's ſupport;

and the ſuffering of which to ſink and die through *penuriouſneſs*, or on any other conſideration, would be an irretrievable public damage, and a blot and reproach to the *colony*, never to be wiped off.—And while ye are *decreeing juſtice*, and conſulting the common weal, if any proper method could (in your wiſdom) be deviſed, for preventing the multitude of *law-ſuits* (ſo impoveriſhing and pernicious in their effects) it would be doing a very ſubſtantial ſervice to the public, and doubtleſs be acceptable to our great Lord, who has let us know that *where envy and ſtrife are, there is confuſion, and every evil work.*

Let me alſo ſuggeſt to your thoughts, the pitiable caſe of the *poor heathen* in this *land*, who are *periſhing for lack of viſion*—and query, whether faithfulneſs to our Redeemer, to whom the *heathen* are promiſed for an *inheritance*; yea, reſpect to our own intereſt and future quiet; as well as to the honor of God and Chriſt, and the ſalvation of thoſe darkned and dying immortals, don't require active and coſtly endeavours, to ſpread the goſpel among them, and to bring them into Chriſt's fold?

But theſe things I know, have been repeatedly urged, on theſe occaſions; and whether (yet) they will be thought at all worthy of your *Honor's* after attention, I can't tell.——Permit me juſt to add, that we have entire confidence, that ye will not be wanting, from time to time, in the uſe of moſt prudent and vigorous endeavours, to obtain

tain a redreſs of ſuch *grievances*, or removal of ſuch *burdens* as we groan under; in ſpecial, ſuch as may be juſtly conſidered infringments upon our eſſential rights and liberties: with a ſuitable bravery, firmneſs and reſolution, oppoſing every the *leaſt* encroachment upon the natural and conſtitutional claims of your people, let it ſpring from what quarter it will. But I fear leſt I treſpaſs too far upon your patience—and will only ſay,

MAY ye (moſt honored Fathers) be enabled ever to conduct us with juſtice and peace, and diſcharge your important truſt to the acceptance of that *eternal Wiſdom*, from whom earthly kings hold their crowns, and by whoſe aid the rulers over men, ordain and adminiſter juſtice! And when he appears in ſupernal pomp and majeſty, to take an account of human affairs, and adjuſt and ſettle the matters of his kingdom; may ye hear him ſaying to you, before angels and men, *ye have been faithful over a few things*, greatly ſerviceable in your lower ſtations, *I will make you rulers over many things*; *enter ye into the joy of your Lord*; while all heaven, with ſtrong acclaim, ſhouts you welcome to the bright abodes, the diſtinguiſhed ſeats of bleſſedneſs, in your Father's and Saviour's kingdom.

IN the next place,

2. MY Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the goſpel-miniſtry, will allow me (a ſtripling, and one of the leaſt of their order) to direct my diſ-

courſe to them, and beſeech them (with myſelf) *to take heed to the miniſtry which we have received of the Lord Jeſus.* Our office is of his immediate appointment, who is the Head and Lord of the church, in a ſpecial manner; Who, *when he aſcended on high, gave ſome apoſtles, and ſome prophets, and ſome evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and teachers,* for the good and edification of his body myſtical.—— And the particular duties of our function, and the manner of fulfilling them, are preſcribed by him; and a buſineſs it truly is, of the greateſt importance, for his honor, and the ſalvation of precious ſouls. By duly employing ourſelves wherein, we do peculiarly ſerve his infinitely valuable intereſts. We are the *miniſters of Jeſus*, the *Prince of Glory*; and are to be ſubſervient to his deſigns, in the advancement of his ſpiritual kingdom, in oppoſition to the kingdom of ſatan, the *uſurping tyrant and god of this world.* And to this end, muſt ſet ourſelves to promote the cauſe of *truth*, *virtue* and *righteouſneſs*; which is, in the moſt effectual way, to ſerve the noble cauſe of our enthroned Saviour.— For in *this* it conſiſts, in condradiction to the devil's intereſt; which is founded in *darkneſs*, *ſin and unrighteouſneſs.*—For *this* we are ſent by *him*; whoſe injunction infers upon us, the moſt ſacred and binding obligations; being the ſupream, immortal king; and who has deſerved infinitely well of us; being the kindeſt maſter, the beſt of benefactors, and the moſt generous and glorious rewarder. And as we are dependant on Chriſt for our commiſſion; ſo far aſſiſtance and all ſupport; who *holds*

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the ſtars in his right hand. And abundant encouragement we have to fidelity. But if we proſtitute our office to baſe and ignoble ends; or are careleſs of the work and duty aſſigned us, what may we expect when the right-aiming thunder-bolts go abroad? Having miſapply'd our talents, and betrayed the cauſe we undertook, the charge of diſloyalty will lye againſt us, and deep and overpowering confuſion muſt cover us before that bright and immenſe theatre, and in the preſence of ſurrounding worlds.—While *knowing*, therefore, *the terrors*, as well as mercies *of our Lord*; let us with great diligence, apply ourſelves to the duty of our place; *be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*; preach the goſpel purely and faithfully, and live what we preach; and herein be aiding to magiſtrates and rulers, in promoting righteouſneſs and ſerving the public benefit.—And may *Moſes* and *Aaron* walk hand in hand in this work! a perfect agreement ſubſiſting between the *pulpit* and the *bench*. "Let us pray "and preach down *ſin*, our *common enemy*, while ci- "vil rulers exert their authority to ſuppreſs it, and "ſo make our ſermons reach their end.—" And let the love of Chriſt conſtrain us to the moſt painful and zealous endeavours to put a ſtop to the prevalence of vice, and advance powerful, practical religion, whereby we ſhall beſt ſerve our generation; anſwer the high and uſeful end of our office, and further the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, which is our greateſt honor. And thus, while the miniſters of juſtice and religion, in their diſtinct departments, unitedly ſerve under the banners of *the*

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captain of our ſalvation, we may hope that righteouſneſs will take a glorious ſpread among us; and our *Jeruſalem become a joy and praiſe in the Earth.*— And as ſubſervient hereto, doth it not greatly concern us to hold *faſt the form of ſound words*; and keep uncorrupt *the faith once delivered to the ſaints*; ſtrenuouſly to maintain, defend, and clearly hold up to view, the doctrines of grace; thoſe pillar truths, which are the peculiar glory of the goſpel; and are *doctrines according to godlineſs*; according to the rule of it, and tending to promote it: all which center in *Chriſt*; who is to be laid by us in the foundation, without ſubſtituting other things in his ſtead, for acceptance with God; ſuch as *moral righteouſneſs*; *diſpoſitions for grace*; *evangelical repentance*; *faith or holineſs*, &c. It is ſad to obſerve how the grace of the goſpel is obſcured and eclipſed by the faſhionable tenets of the preſent day; and *Chriſt* moſtly ſet aſide; *his Godhead and ſatisfaction*; *the perſonality and operation of the ſpirit*; *original ſin, as to imputation and adhelion*; *eternal election*; *efficacious grace in converſion*; *juſtification by Emmanuel's imputed righteouſneſs through faith*; and *the ſaints final perſeverance*, denied and exploded by multitudes, who call themſelves *proteſtant diſſenters*: which things bode awfully; tend to undermine the goſpel, and ſweep the religion thereof with all it's mounds away.—And doth it not behove thoſe who are ſet for the defence of the truth, to appear bold and undaunted in it's glorious cauſe; maintaining without flinching, thoſe important and fundamental articles, which once demoliſhed, the

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Church totters, the goodly-building falls, and great is it's ruin? And a not inſiſting upon; or paſſing over in ſilence, *which doctrines*, in our pulpits, makes way for introducing the contrary errors.---What, though reproached (with dictatorial airs) as weak, narrow-contracted bigotted ſouls; wanting largeneſs of mind, or a generous way of thinking: ſhall we be ſhamed out of the goſpel? Or induced ingloriouſly to yield the day; and give up *all*, as unable to ſtand the ſhock of rude aſſault and raillery from men that would engroſs all ſenſe and underſtanding to themſelves!---*ſome* are for a coalition between *Arminianiſm* and *Calviniſm*. But vain and impoſſible the attempt: as well may *light* and *darkneſs* accord; *fire* and *water* blend together, and compoſe one common maſs.—Let us not aſſay to build *wood*, *hay* and *ſtubble* upon the *foundation*, which will be burnt up. But firmly adhere to the pure, refined truths of Chriſtianity; thoſe right *puritan* principles, which will endure the tryal, (being abundantly taught in the everlaſting goſpel; for which *Martyrs*, have bled, not accounting their lives dear to them in compariſon thereof) and which will be productive of a glorious progeny of good works, and adminiſter conſolation living and dying.—Theſe are *our glory*, however lightly eſteemed, by any of the *ingenious or witty*, who may prefer *Abana and Pharphar*, *rivers of Damaſcus*, *to all the waters of Iſrael*: and they will abide, when all human ſchemes and inventions are overthrown.—I mean not to plead for any *doubtful novel opinions*, *abſtruſe ſpeculations*, or *metaphyſical niceties*; on which

which ſome may lay great ſtreſs, as though the eſſence of all religion conſiſted therein; and make the *criterion* of *Calviniſm* ‡; any more than the uninſtituted terms of chriſtian communion, which ſome are for ſetting up; owing to their confounding together, the viſible and inviſible adminiſtration of the covenant; which things (perhaps) with the *hay and ſtubble* are alſo to be burnt up. But I ſpeak of thoſe plainly revealed doctrines of grace, which have been received by theſe *Churches* from the beginning; but from which, ſo many in our day diſcover a diſpoſition to warp off. And is it not time for us, when ſuch a flood of error in doctrinals, (both *arminian* and *antinomian*) and diſſoluteneſs in practiſe is breaking in upon us; to exert ourſelves with utmoſt vigilence and judicious zeal, to prevent the threatning evil; to ſtem the torrent, and guard againſt the growing infection? But perhaps, I have ſaid more than enough.—I will only add, may our good and gracious Lord and maſter, be ever near to direct, encourage and ſucceed you in your labors for the beſt good of mankind! and may all our unhappy contentions end in *this one*, who ſhall beſt ſerve the intereſt of our great Redeemer, and promote the kingdom of peace, truth and righteouſneſs, which he is ſet to maintain. And when *the chief Shepherd*

‡ I have no quarrel with any gentlemen for their new ſchemes propoſed with modeſty; but would query, whether *philoſophical*, and *metaphyſical* explications of the doctrines of religion are ſo agreeable to that *wiſdom*, which dictated them, and deſigned them to be ſo plain that children and fools ſhould not err therein.

Shepherd ſhall appear, cloathed with the character of *Supreme Judge*, and diſtribute final recompences; may ye receive at his hands, an ever-blooming, diſflouriſhing diadem in the heavens.

IT now remains, in the laſt place,

3. THAT I addreſs this whole audience; and exhort all, in their places, to endeavour that government may obtain its true and proper end among us. Ye have heard ſomething of the uſe and deſign of civil government, and the relation it has to the *Eternal Wiſdom*. Such a government is ſet over us, to do juſtice and judgment; and by your regular ſubſerviency thereto, ye may approve yourſelves, not only to the government and laws, but to him *by whom kings reign, and princes decree juſtice*; which is a matter that none ought to be careleſs about. All ſhould do what they can, to facilitate the work of rulers, and be helpful to their ſerving our beſt intereſts, and the intereſt of Chriſt, of virtue and righteouſneſs, which is well-pleaſing in the eyes of the Lord. To this end, let all be ſubject to good rulers, and juſt laws; knowing that chriſtianity is a friend to civil policy. See to be juſt and righteous yourſelves; and as far as may be in your own ſphere, endeavour to make others ſo; which alſo concerns you, as ye are the profeſſed ſubjects of him on whom good rulers and laws depend. And tho' ye are not *magiſtrates*, or called to *bear the ſword*, yet ye may not ſhift off the buſineſs of ſerving Chriſt and your generation, wholly to others. Ye are, *as yet freemen*; have the moſt hap-

py privileges, and ſignal advantages, for the ſervice of God and your fellow-men. Bleſs the Lord therefor, for theſe precious immunities, and liberties wherewith Chriſt has made you free; and let us ſtand faſt therein, with firmneſs and invincible reſolution, tho' with becoming decency and reſpect, aſſerting our rights, and uſing every prudent meaſure for their preſervation; "*rights* "founded in the *law of nature*, which is the *law of* "*God*, eternal and immutable;" the loſs of which, nothing here can compenſate: For,

"A day, an hour of virtuous liberty,
"Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.
"What is life? 'tis not to ſtalk, & draw freſh air
"From time to time, or gaze upon the ſun:
"'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
"Life grows inſipid, and has loſt it's reliſh."

And while *duly* prizing and improving your liberties, ſee greatly to value the welfare of the common-wealth, of which ye are members, and be forward to promote it. Diligently attend to *æconomy*, *frugality* and *induſtry*, ſo peculiarly neceſſary at this day; and without which our ruin is inevitable. And give all due reſpect and obedience to thoſe raiſed to places of power, as the *civil miniſters of Chriſt*, appointed *for our good*; and therein ſhew your reſpect to Chriſt himſelf.—And while thus doing, ſuffer me, *men* and *bretheren*, to intreat you all to acquaint yourſelves truly with that *Eſſential Wiſdom*, from whom all rightful power comes; and unfeignedly ſubmit to his conduct and rule. Believe on his name, and bow to his authority;

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embrace his precepts and obſerve his orders: under whoſe government the greateſt felicity is to be enjoyed; and *to ſerve* whom is *to reign*; while the ſervice of ſin is the worſt bondage and moſt ignominious ſlavery.—Nor let any proudly and ungratefully reject his wiſe counſels and harden their hearts againſt his juſt rule. But while he ſays, *to you O men do I call, and my voice is to the ſons of men*; be obſequious, that your ſouls may live.—Are any among us diſpoſed to treat theſe things with banter and ridicule; and put away all wiſe and ſober thoughts; reſolving not to mind ſo grave a thing as religion; but to indulge themſelves in luxury and vanity, while the inſtructions of wiſdom are contemned and ſet at nought? Alas! wretched men! How ſoon will death terminate their vain life; and all their wild mirth be exchanged for unremitting ſorrows! "though they ſleep ſoundly now, they "muſt at length awake; when they that lived "*in jeſt*, muſt be damn'd *in earneſt*." They may now laugh and ſneer and ſcoff at *preachers* and *ſermons*: but the day haſtens when their *drollery* and profane jeers will be over, and they will wiſh from the bottom of their hearts that they had been more ſerius.—*O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly mine honor be not thou united.*

WELL; let us bear in mind that *the end of all things is at hand*; and thence learn to *watch and be ſober*.—The *now* diſregarded Jeſus, will ſoon appear as *the mighty God* and *prince of the kings of the earth*;

earth; when *the ſun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the moon into blood*; time ſhall be no more, and all be vaſt eternity. And who then will be deemed, to have acted the wiſeſt part? They who ſubmited to Chriſt's royal power, or the ſcorners of him? Then ſin will appear infinitely deteſtable; and holineſs all eligible; and the true wiſdom of religion be manifeſt in the face of the univerſe.------- Wherefore, let all of every order and age; high and low, rich and poor, old and young, attend to *wiſdom's* mandates; welcome Chriſt's dominion, and faithfully ſerve his intereſt in our day; and with diligence prepare for our laſt account before the bar of eternal judgment: when all the nations of the world ſhall meet together in one throng'd aſſembly there; and *kings* and *princes*, no leſs than *peaſants* and *ſlaves* ſhall be adjudged by this *ſupream wiſdom* to their unalterable ſtates.—*Then*, in that great and glorious, that joyful, but dreadful day, may we, who are now convened in God's houſe (though we ſee one another no more here) meet at the right hand of the infinite Judge; and being by him approved and pronounced *bleſſed*, join the adoring company, and bear a part in the *loud ſhouts*, the *high triumphs* and *ſweet Hallelujah's* of the Lord's Redeemed, *the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born*; to the glory of him who ſits on the throne, and of the Lamb forever and ever,

A M E N.

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